

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claims 2-5, 11 and 12 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1 and 10 to read as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An ink jet printing apparatus that forms an image by ejecting ink from a print head, in which a plurality of ejecting portion rows are arranged, to a print medium, each of the ejecting portion rows having a plurality of ejecting portions arranged therein, the apparatus comprising:

a carriage that scans the print head; and

preliminary ejecting means for ejecting the ink from the ejecting portions in the print head such that the ejection is not involved in formation of the image,

wherein the ejecting portion rows are arranged in a scanning direction of the carriage, the ejecting portions are arranged in each row in a direction transverse to the scanning direction, said preliminary ejecting means sequentially selects one of the plurality of ejecting portion rows as an ejecting portion row on which an ejecting operation is performed, while said carriage is not performing a scanning operation, and said preliminary ejecting means then subjects the selected ejecting portion row to preliminary ejection, and in the preliminary ejection for the selected ejecting portion row, the ejection, which is not involved in formation of the image, is carried out for all the ejecting portions arranged in the selected ejecting portion row.

Claims 2-5 (Canceled).

6. (Previously presented) An ink jet printing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of ejecting portion rows are provided for respective colors of ejected inks.

Claims 7 and 8 (Cancelled).

9. (Previously presented) An ink jet printing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the ejecting portions use thermal energy to cause ink to generate bubbles, a pressure of which causes ink to be ejected as droplets.

10. (Currently Amended) A preliminary ejecting method executed using an ink jet printing apparatus that forms an image by ejecting ink from a print head, in which a plurality of ejecting portion rows are arranged, to a print medium, each of the ejecting portion rows having a plurality of ejecting portions arranged therein, the ink being ejected from the ejecting portions in the print head such that the ejection is not involved in formation of the image, the print head being mounted on a carriage for conveying the print head, the method comprising:

a step of sequentially selecting one of the plurality of ejecting portion rows as an ejecting portion row on which an ejecting operation is performed and then subjecting the selected ejecting portion row to preliminary ejection, wherein in the preliminary ejection for the selected ejecting portion row, the ejection, which is not involved in formation of the image, is carried out for all the ejecting portions arranged in the selected ejecting portion row,

wherein the ejecting portion rows are arranged in a scanning direction of the carriage and the ejecting portions are arranged in each row in a direction transverse to the scanning direction.

Claims 11 and 12 (Canceled).